

Message Text

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AMCONGEN NAPLES

US DOCOSOUTH

SHAPEUSNR

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E.O. 11562: GDS

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SUBJECT: BETTINO CRAXI PSI'S MOST LIKELY CHOICE TO SUCCEED
DEMARTINO

REF: ROME 11296

1. CONVULSIVE SOCIALIST CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING PROLONGED
ONE DAY TO ELECT A NEW DIRESTORATE, A NEW SECRETARY, AND
VOTE A POLITICAL DOCUMENT. FACTIONS HAVE BEEN FORMALLY
DISSOLVED, THOUGH CONTINUOUSLY SUCCEEDING HUDDLES OF THE
"EX-FACTIONS" TO RESOLVE THE PARTY'S CRISIS HAVE LEFT THE
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CRNTRAL COMMITTEES FORMAL SESSIONS PRACTICALLY UNATTENDED.

THE DEMARTINO GROUP HAS SUFFERED MAJOR INDIVIDUAL DEFECTIONS AND A SECESSION LED BY ENRICO MANCA.

2. MANCINI GROUP HAS ABLY USED ITS WEIGHT TO BLOCK BOTH DEMARTINO'S RETURN TO LEADERSHIP, AND THE CHOICE OF GIOLITTI, PROPOSED BY THE LEFT. IT HAS THUS APPARENTLY OPENED THE WAY TO GENERAL AGREEMENT ON ELECTING 42-YEAR-OLD BETTINO CRAXI, NENNI'S UNDERSTUDY AND LONG HEIR APPARENT.

3. CONVERGENCE ON CRAXI IS GREATLY FAVORED BY FACT THAT HE REPRESENTS A GENERATIONAL CHANGE IN LEADERSHIP. MAJOR DETERMINANT OF DEVELOPMENTS AT CONGRESS, BESIDES LEFT-WING WITHDRAWAL FROM FACADE OF UNITARY FRONT, HAS IN FACT BEEN REVOLT OF SO-CALLED 40 YEAR OLDS. THUS CRAXI'S CANDIDACY HAS FOUND YOUNG SUPPORTERS ACROSS ALL THE "EX-FACTIONS, INCLUDING LEFT, DESPITE EXISTENCE OF SHARP DIFFERENCES ON POLICY BETWEEN THEM. CRAXI ALSO ACCEPTABLE TO MUCH OF OLD GUARD BECAUSE HE HAS RISEN THROUGH THE RANKS, IS WELL-PREPARED POLITICALLY, AND HAS DEMONSTRATED GREAT SKILL IN OPERATING WITHIN THE SYSTEM. THUS HE REPRESENTS COMFORTING CONTINUITY OF A SORT. OF THE OLD GUARD, MANCINI IS CRAXI'S MOST EXPLICIT SUPPORTER OUTSIDE HIS OWN AUTONOMIST "EX-FACTION."

4. SHOULD CRAZI'S CANDIDACY PREVAIL, NENNI WOULD MOVE UP TO HONORARY PRESIDENCY OF THE PARTY TO MAKE ROOM FOR THE REAL PRESIDENCY OF DEMARTINO. GIOVANNI MOSCA, WHO RESIGNED AS VICE-SECRETARY THE NIGHT THE ELECTION RETURNS WERE SOUNDED TO PROMOTE THE KIND OF RENEWAL WHICH IS COMING ABOUT, WOULD SUCCEED CRAZSI AS HEAD OF THE PSI'S GROUP OF DEPUTIES IN PARLIAMENT. UNCERTAINTIES REMAIN, HOWEVER; DEMARTINO'S FAITHFUL ADHERENTS ARE STILL FIGHTING TO HAVE HIM RECONFIRMED. ARGUING THAT IF THE POLITICAL DOCUMENT FINALLY VOTED REPRESENTS CONTINUITY OF PAST POLICY, THEN THERE IS NO REASON TO CHANGE SECRETARIES.

5. PARTY QUESTIONS HAVE SO PREOCCUPIED THE CENTRAL
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COMMITTEE THAT POLICY IS ONLY NOW BEING SERIOUSLY ADDRESSED IN THE CLOSING SESSIONS. A DRAFT (TEXT NOT YET AVAILABLE) HAS BEEN PREPARED BY A 25-MEMBER COMMITTEE, BUT IS ENCOUNTERING RESERVATIONS. (GIOLITTI PREPARED AND PRESENTED HIS OWN DOCUMENT, BUT IT ATTRACTED NO OTHER SUPPORT. LEFT-WING LOMBARDI GROUP CONSIDERED ACCEPTING IT BUT DECIDED TO GO ALONG WITH THE COMMITTEE'S.)

6. COMMENT: CRAXI'S POSSIBLE RISE TO THE SECRETARY-SHIP IS IN ITSELF A POSITIVE DEVELOPMENT; HE HAS NO ILLUSIONS ABOUT THE PCI AND, AMONG EMERGING NEW LEADERS, IS ONE OF THE MOST DISPOSED TO WORK WITH THE DC. HOWEVER, IT REMAINS TO BE SEEN HOW MUCH FREEDOM OF ACTION HE WILL HAVE TO DETERMINE ANY CHANGE IN THE PSI'S POSITIONS. NEITHER THE MANNER IN WHICH HE IS BEING CHOSEN, THE LEFT WING'S INCREASED WEIGHT IN THE PARTY, NOW EXACERBATED DIFFERENCES WITHIN THE PSI AUGUR WELL, AT LEAST IN THE SHORT TERM. MUCH DEPENDS ON WHETHER THE PSI ENDS BY CONSTRUCTING ANOTHER, PARALYZING, UNITARY FACADE, OR FRANKLY SPLITS INTO A MAJORITY AND MINORITY WHICH ALLOWS THE MAJORITY TO WORK ITS WILL.VOLPE

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